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TALES OF THE COAST-GUARD.

CALF-LOVE.

It may be as well to observe at starting, that the slight, unpretending sketches I am about to jot down of a few rough adventures in the Preventive Service of this country, will present no fancy pictures of high-souled, dashing smugglers, such as I have seen spouting heroics at minor theatres—rollicking gentlemen, who abound in all the first-rate virtues of generosity, daring, gallantry, and skill, slightly clouded, if at all, by an irresistible propensity for defrauding the revenue—more, it is usually made to appear, for the fun and dash of the thing, or to rig out amiable sweethearts or devoted wives with expensive nick-nacks, than for any liking for the, in the main, idle and skulking life of the professional smuggler. I never ran athwart any such gentry; but then it is right to state that my experience was confined to about a hundred miles or thereabouts of the southern coasts of England, and those heroes, I fancy, are only to be found, if at all, in latitudes frequented by their relatives—the horse-marines. The fellows I now and then overhauled were of quite another stamp, and seldom sailors either, at least not of the true salt-water lick. Handy enough in a boat, no doubt, but with much better land than sea-legs, as many an unsuccessful shore-chase has but too frequently proved to my entire conviction. I am speaking of between thirty and forty years ago, at which time your genuine sea-dog but little relished such a hide-and-seek along-shore life, especially if anything better could be had; and it can, I should think, be hardly otherwise in these days of steam revenue-cruisers, admirably organised coast-guard, reduced duties, and, consequently, consumptive profits. Thus much hinted by way of warning to readers of a romantic taste, I proceed with the narrative of my first adventure in the revenue-service, prefacing it with a brief chapter of my earlier history, without which it would be nearly if not altogether unintelligible.

My name is Warneford—at least it is not very unlike that—and I was born at Itchen, a village distant in those days about a mile and a half, by land and ferry, from Southampton. How much nearer the, as I hear and read, rapidly-increasing town has since approached I cannot say, as it will be twenty-nine years next July since I finally quitted the neighbourhood. The village, at that time chiefly inhabited by ferry and fishermen, crept in a straggling sort of way up a declivity from the margin of the Itchen river, which there reaches and joins the Southampton estuary, till it arrives at Pear-Tree Green, an eminence commanding one of the finest and most varied land-and-water views the

eye of man has, I think, ever rested upon. My father, a retired lieutenant of the royal navy, was not a native of the place, as his name alone would sufficiently indicate to a person acquainted with the then Itchen people—almost every one of whom was either a Dible or a Diaper—but he had been many years settled there, and Pear-Tree Churchyard contained the dust of his wife and five children—I and my sister Jane, who was a year older than myself, being all of his numerous family who survived their childhood. We were in fair circumstances, as my father, in addition to his half-pay, possessed an income of something above a hundred pounds a year. Jane and I were carefully, though of course not highly or expensively educated; and as soon as I had attained the warrior-age of fifteen, I was despatched to sea to fight my country's battles—Sir Joseph Yorke having, at my father's request, kindly obtained a midshipman's warrant for me; and not many weeks after joining the ship to which I was appointed, I found myself, to my great astonishment, doubling the French line at the Nile—an exploit which I have since read of with far more satisfaction than I remember to have experienced during its performance.

Four years passed before I had an opportunity of revisiting home; and it was with a beating as well as joyful heart, and light, elastic step, that I set off to walk the distance from Gosport to Itchen. I need hardly say that I was welcomed by Jane with tears of love and happiness. It was not long, however, before certain circumstances occurred which induced my worthy but peremptory father to cut my leave of absence suddenly and unmercifully short. I have before noticed that the aborigines of my native place were for the most part Dibles or Diapers. Well, it happened that among the former was one Ellen Dible, the daughter of a fisherman somewhat more prosperous than many of his fellows. This young lady was a slim, active, blue-eyed, bright-haired gipsy, about two years younger than myself, but somewhat tall and womanly for her age, of a light, charming figure, and rather genteel manners; which latter quality, by the by, must have come by nature, for but little education of any kind had fallen to her share. She was, it may be supposed, the *belle* of the place, and very numerous were her rustic admirers; but they all vanished in a twinkling, awestruck by my uniform, and especially by the dangling dirk, which I occasionally handled in a very alarming manner; and I, sentimental moon-calf that I was, felt, as it is termed, deeply and earnestly in love with the village beauty! It must have been her personal graces alone—her conversation it could not be—which thus entranced me; for she seldom

spoke, and then in reply only, and in monosyllables; but she listened divinely, and as we strolled in the evening through the fields and woods between Ithen and Netley Abbey, gazed with such enchanting eloquence in my face as I poured forth the popular love and nonsense poetry of the time, that it is very possible I might have been sooner or later entrapped into a ruinous marriage—not by her, poor girl! she was, I am sure, as guileless as infancy, but by her parents, who were scheming, artful people—had not my father discovered what was going on, and in his rough way dispelled my silly day-dreams at once and for ever.

The churchyard at the summit of Pear-Tree Green, it used to be commonly said, was that in which Gray composed his famous 'Elegy,' or at all events which partially inspired it. I know not if this be correct; but I remember thinking, as I sat one fine September evening by the side of Ellen Dible upon the flat wooden railing which then enclosed it, that the tradition had great likelihood. The broad and tranquil waters of the Southampton and Itchen rivers—bounded in the far distance by the New Forest, with its wavy masses of varying light and shade, and on the left by the leafy woods, from out of which I often think the gray ruins of the old abbey must in these days look grimly and spectre-like forth upon the teeming, restless life which mocks its hoary solitude—were at the full of a spring-tide. It was just, too, the hour of 'parting day'; and as the sun-tipped spires of the Southampton churches faded gradually into indistinctness, and the earlier stars looked out, the curfew, mellowed by distance into music, came to us upon the light air which gently stirred fair Ellen's glossy ringlets, as she, with her bonnet in her hand—for our walk had tired her—looked with her dove-innocent, transparent eyes in mine, while I repeated Gray's melodious lines. The Elegy was concluded, and I was rapturising even more vehemently than was my wont, when, whack! I received a blow on my shoulder, which sent us both off the rail; for Ellen held me by the arm, and it was quite as much as I could do to keep my feet when I reached them. I turned fiercely round, only to encounter the angry and sardonic countenance of my father. 'I'll have no more of this nonsense, Bob,' he gruffly exclaimed. 'Be off home with you, and to-morrow I'll see you safe on board your ship, depend upon it. As for this pretty minx,' he continued, addressing Ellen, who so trembled with confusion and dismay that she could scarcely tie her bonnet-strings, 'I should think she would be better employed in mending her father's shirts, or darning her brother's stockings, than in gossiping her time away with a brainless young lubber like you.' I was of course awfully incensed, but present resistance, I knew, was useless; and after contriving to exchange a mute gesture with Ellen of eternal love, constancy, and despair, we took our several ways homewards. Before twelve o'clock the next day I was posting to Gosport, accompanied by my father, but not till after I had obtained, through the agency of my soft-hearted sister, a farewell interview with Ellen, when we of course made fervent vows of mutual fidelity—affirmed and consecrated, at Ellen's suggestion, by the mystical ceremony of breaking a crooked sixpence in halves—a moiety to be worn by each of us about our necks, as an eternal memorial and pendant protest against the flinty hearts of fathers.

This boyish fancy faded but slowly and lingeringly away with the busy and tumultuous years which passed over my head, till the peace of 1815 cast me an almost useless sea-waif upon the land, to take root and vegetate there as I best might upon a lieutenant's half-pay. My father had died about two years before, and the hundred a year he left us was scarcely more than sufficient for the support of my sister, whose chances of an eligible marriage had vanished with her comeliness,

which a virulent attack of smallpox had utterly destroyed, though it had in nothing changed the patient sweetness of her disposition, and the gentle loving spirit that shone through all its disfiguring scars and scams. I had never heard directly from Ellen Dible, although, during the first months of separation, I had written to her many times; the reason of which was partially explained by a few lines in one of Jane's letters, announcing Ellen Dible's marriage—it seemed under some kind of moral compulsion—to a person of her own grade, and their removal from Itchen. This happened about six months after my last interview with her. I made no further inquiries, and, Jane thinking the subject might be a painful one, it happened that, by a kind of tacit understanding, it was never afterwards alluded to between us.

The utter weariness of an idle shore life soon became insupportable, and I determined to solicit the good offices of Sir Joseph Yorke to the Admiralty. The gallant admiral had now taken up his permanent residence near Hamble, a village on the river of that name, which issues into the Southampton water not very far from opposite Calshot Castle. Sir Joseph was drowned there about eight or nine years after I left the station. A more perfect gentleman, let me pause a moment to say, or a better seaman, than Sir Joseph, never, I believe, existed; and of a handsome, commanding presence too—'half-way up a hatchway' at least, to use his own humorous self-description, his legs scarcely corresponding in vigorous outline to the rest of his person. He received me with his usual frank urbanity, and I left him provided with a letter to the secretary of the Admiralty—the ultimate and not long-delayed result of which was my appointment to the command of the *Rose* revenue-cutter, the duties attached to which consisted in carefully watching, in the interest of His Majesty's customs, the shores of the Southampton river, the Solent sea, the Wight, and other contiguous portions of the seaboard of Hants and Dorset.

The ways of smugglers were of course new to me; but we had several experienced hands on board, and as I zealously applied myself to the study of the art of contraband, I was not long in acquiring a competent knowledge of the traditional contrivances employed to defraud the revenue. Little of interest occurred during the first three or four weeks of my novel command, except that by the sharpened vigilance of our look-out, certain circumstances came to light, strongly indicating that Barnaby Diaper, the owner of a cutter-rigged fishing-vessel of rather large burthen, living near Hamble Creek, was extensively engaged in the then profitable practice of running moonshine, demurely and industriously as, when ashore, he appeared to be, everlastingly mending his nets, or cobbling the bottom of the smack's boat. He was a hale, wiry fellow this Barnaby—Old Barnaby, as he was familiarly called, surnames in those localities being seldom used—with a wooden stolidity of countenance which utterly defied scrutiny if it did not silence suspicion. His son, who was a partner in the cutter, lived at Weston, a beautifully-situated hamlet between Itchen and Netley. A vigilant watch was consequently kept upon the movements of the Barnabys, father, son, and grandson—this last a smart, precocious youngster, I understood, of about sixteen years of age, by which family trio the suspicious *Blue-eyed Maid* was, with occasional assistance, manned, sailed, and worked. Very rarely, indeed, was the *Blue-eyed Maid* observed to be engaged in her ostensible occupation. She would suddenly disappear, and as suddenly return, and always, we soon came to notice, on the nights when the *Rose* happened to be absent from the Southampton waters.

We had missed her for upwards of a week, when information reached us that a large lugger we had chased without success a few nights previously would attempt to run a cargo at a spot not far from Lymington.

ton, soon after midnight. I accordingly, as soon as darkness had fallen, ran down, and stood off and on, within signal-distance of the shore-men with whom I had communicated, till dawn, in vain expectation of the promised prize. I strongly suspected that we had been deceived; and on rounding Calshot Castle on our return, I had no doubt of it, for there, sure enough, was the *Blue-eyed Maid* riding lightly at anchor off Hamble Creek, and from her slight draught of water it was quite evident that her cargo, whatever it might have consisted of, had been landed, or otherwise disposed of. They had been smart with their work, for the summer night and our absence had lasted but a few hours only. I boarded her, and found Old Barnaby, whom I knew by sight, and his two descendants, whom I had not before seen, busily engaged swabbing the cutter's deck, and getting matters generally into order and ship-shape. The son a good deal resembled the old man, except that his features were a much more intelligent and good-humoured expression; and the boy was an active, bold-eyed, curly-headed youngster, whose countenance, but for a provoking sauciness of expression apparently habitual to him, would have been quite handsome. I thought I had seen his face somewhere before, and he, I noticed, suddenly stopped from his work on hearing my name, and looked at me with a smiling but earnest curiosity. The morning's work had, I saw, been thoroughly performed; and as I was in no humour for a profitless game of cross questions and crooked answers, I, after exchanging one or two colloquial courtesies, in which I had by no means the advantage, returned to the *Rose* more than ever satisfied that the interesting family I had left required and would probably repay the closest watchfulness and care.

On the evening of the same day the *Blue-eyed Maid* again vanished: a fortnight slipped by, and she had not reappeared; when the *Rose*, having slightly grazed her bottom in going over the shifting shingle at the north-west of the Wight, went into Portsmouth harbour to be examined. Some of her copper was found to be stripped off; there were other trifling damages; and two or three days would elapse before she could be got ready for service. This interval I spent with my sister. The evening after I arrived at Itchen, Jane and I visited Southampton, and accompanied an ancient female acquaintance residing in Bugle Street—a dull, grass-grown place in those days, whatever it may be now—to the theatre in, I believe, the same street. The performances were not over till near twelve o'clock, and after escorting the ladies home, I wended my way towards the Sun Inn on the quay, where I was to sleep—my sister remaining for the night with our friend. The weather, which had been dark and squally an hour or two before, was now remarkably fine and calm; and the porter of the inn telling me they should not close the house for some time longer, I strolled towards the Platform Battery, mounted by a single piece of brass ordnance overlooking the river, and pointing menacingly towards the village of Hythe. The tide was at the full, and a faint breeze slightly rippled the magnificent expanse of water which glanced and sparkled in the bright moon and starlight of a cloudless autumn sky. My attention was not long absorbed by the beauty of the scene, peerless as I deemed it; for unless my eyes strangely deceived me, the *Blue-eyed Maid* had returned, and quietly anchored off Weston. She appeared to have but just brought up; for the mainsail, three new patches in which chiefly enabled me to recognise her, was still flapping in the wind, and it appeared to me—though from the distance, and the shadow of the dark background of woods in which she lay, it was difficult to speak with certainty—that she was deeply laden. There was not a moment to be lost; and fortunately, just in the nick of time, a boat with two watermen approached the platform steps. I tendered them a guinea to put me on board the smack off

Weston—an offer which they eagerly accepted; and I was soon speeding over the waters to her. My uniform must have apprised the Barnabys of the nature of the visit about to be paid them; for when we were within about a quarter of a mile of their vessel, two figures, which I easily recognised to be Old Barnaby and his grandson, jumped into a boat that had been loading alongside, and rowed desperately for the shore, but at a point considerably farther up the river, towards Itchen. There appeared to be no one left on board the *Blue-eyed Maid*, and the shore-confederates of the smugglers did not shew themselves, conjecturing, doubtless, as I had calculated they would, upon my having plenty of help within signal call. I therefore determined to capture the boat first, and return with her to the cutter. The watermen, excited by the chase, pulled with a will, and in about ten minutes we ran alongside the Barnabys' boat, jumped in, and found her loaded to the gunwale with brandy kegs.

'Fairly caught at last, old fellow!' I exclaimed exultingly, in reply to the maledictions he showered on us. 'And now pull the boat's head round, and make for the *Blue-eyed Maid*, or I'll run you through the body.'

'Pull her head round yourself,' he sullenly rejoined, as he rose from the thwart and unshipped his oar. 'It's bad enough to be robbed of one's hard earnings without helping the thieves to do it.'

His refusal was of no consequence: the watermen's light skiff was made fast astern, and in a few minutes we were pulling steadily towards the still motionless cutter. Old Barnaby was fumbling among the tubs in search, as he growled out, of his pea-jacket; his hopeful grandson was seated at the stern whistling the then popular air of the 'Woodpecker' with great energy and perfect coolness; and I was standing with my back towards them in the bow of the boat, when the stroke-oarsman suddenly exclaimed: 'What are you at with the boat's painter, you young devil's cub?' The quick mocking laugh of the boy, and the words, 'Now, grandfather, now!' replied to him. Old Barnaby sprang into the boat which the lad had brought close up to the stern, pushing her off as he did so with all his strength; and then the boy, holding the painter or boat-rope, which he had detached from the ring it had been fastened to, in his hand, jumped over the side; in another instant he was hauled out of the water by Old Barnaby, and both were seated and pulling lustily, and with exulting shouts, round in the direction of the *Blue-eyed Maid*, before we had recovered from the surprise which the suddenness and completeness of the trick we had been played excited. We were, however, very speedily in vigorous chase; and as the wind, though favourable, and evidently rising, was still light, we had little doubt of success, especially as some precious minutes must be lost to the smuggler in getting underweigh, neither jib nor foresail being as yet set. The watermen bent fiercely to their oars; and heavily laden as the boat was, we were beginning to slip freely through the water, when an exclamation from one of the men announced another and more perilous trick that the Barnabys had played us. Old Barnaby, in pretending to fumble about for his jacket, had contrived to unship a large plug expressly contrived for the purpose of sinking the boat whenever the exigencies of their vocation might render such an operation advisable; and the water was coming in like a sluice. There was no help for it, and the boat's head was immediately turned towards the shore. Another vociferous shout rang in our ears as the full success of their scheme was observed by the Barnabys, replied to of course by the furious but impotent execrations of the watermen. The boat sank rapidly; and we were still about a hundred yards from the shore when we found ourselves splashing about in the water, which fortunately was not more than up to the armpits of the shortest

of us, but so full of strong and tangled seaweed, that swimming was out of the question; and we had to wade slowly and painfully through it, a step on a spot of more than usually soft mud plumping us down every now and then over head and ears. After reaching the shore and shaking ourselves, we found leisure to look in the direction of the *Blue-eyed Maid*, and had the exquisite pleasure of seeing her glide gracefully through the water as she stood down the river, impelled by the fast-freshening breeze, and towing the watermen's boat securely at her stern.

There were no means of pursuit; and after indulging in sundry energetic vocables hardly worth repeating, we retreated in savage discomfiture towards Weston, plentifully sprinkling the grass and gravel as we slowly passed along; knocked up the landlord of a public-house, and turning in as soon as possible, happily exchanged our dripping attire for warm blankets and clean sheets, beneath the soothing influence of which I, for one, was soon sound asleep.

Day had hardly dawned when we were all three up, and overhauling the mud and weeds—the tide was quite gone out—for the captured boat and tubs. They had vanished utterly: the fairies about Weston had spirited them away while we slept, leaving no vestige whatever of the spoil to which we had naturally looked as some trifling compensation for the night's mishap, and the loss of the watermen's boat, to say nothing of the sousing we had got. It was a bad business certainly, and my promise to provide my helmpates with another boat, should their own not be recovered, soothed but very slightly their sadly-ruffled tempers. But lamentations were useless, and, after the lugubrious expression of a dismal hope for better luck next time, we separated.

This pleasant incident did not in the least abate my anxiety to get once more within hailing distance of the Barnabys; but for a long time my efforts were entirely fruitless, and I had begun to think that the *Blue-eyed Maid* had been permanently transferred to another and less-vigilantly watched station, when a slight inkling of intelligence dispelled that fear. My plan was soon formed. I caused it to be carelessly given out on shore that the *Rose* had sprung her bowsprit in the gale a day or two before, and was going the next afternoon into Portsmouth to get another. In pursuance of this intention, the *Rose* soon after noon slipped her moorings, and sailed for that port; remained quietly there till about nine o'clock in the evening, and then came out under close-reefed storm canvas, for it was blowing great guns from the northward, and steered for the Southampton River. The night was as black as pitch; and but for the continuous and vivid flashes of lightning, no object more than a hundred yards distant from the vessel could have been discerned. We ran up abeam of Hythe without perceiving the object of our search, then tacked, stood across to the other side, and then retraced our course. We were within a short distance of Hamble River, when a prolonged flash threw a ghastly light upon the raging waters, and plainly revealed the *Blue-eyed Maid*, lying to under the lee of the north shore, and it may be about half a mile ahead of us. Unfortunately she saw us at the same moment, and as soon as way could be got upon her she luffed sharply up, and a minute afterwards was flying through the water in the hope of yet escaping her unexpected enemy. By edging away to leeward I contrived to cut her off effectually from running into the Channel by the Needles passage; but nothing daunted, she held boldly on without attempting to reduce an inch of canvas, although, from the press she carried, fairly buried in the sea. Right in the course she was steering, the *Donegal*, a huge eighty-gun ship, was riding at anchor off Spithead. Old Barnaby, who, I could discern by his streaming white hairs, was at the helm, in his anxiety to keep as well to windward of us

as possible, determined, I suppose, to pass as closely as he prudently could under the stern of the line-of-battle ship. Unfortunately, just as the little cutter was in the act of doing so, a furious blast of wind tore away her jib as if it had been cobweb; and, pressed by her large mainsail, the slight vessel flew up into the wind, meeting the *Donegal* as the huge ship drove back from a strain which had brought her half way to her anchors. The crash was decisive, and caused the instant disappearance of the unfortunate smuggler. The cry of the drowning men, if they had time to utter one, was lost amid the raging of the tempest; and although we threw overboard every loose spar we could lay hands on, it was with scarcely the slightest hope that such aid could avail them in that wild sea. I tacked as speedily as possible, and repassed the spot; but the white foam of the waves, as they leaped and dashed about the leviathan bulk of the *Donegal*, was all that could be perceived, eagerly as we peered over the surface of the angry waters. The *Rose* then stood on, and in little more than an hour afterwards was safely anchored off Hythe.

The boy Barnaby, I was glad to hear a day or two afterwards, had not accompanied his father and grandfather in the last trip made by the *Blue-eyed Maid*, and had consequently escaped the fate which had so suddenly overtaken them, and for which it appeared that the smuggling community held me morally accountable. This was to be expected; but I had too often and too lately been familiar with death at sea in every shape, by the rage of man as well as that of the elements, to be more than slightly and temporarily affected by such an incident; so that all remembrance of it would probably have soon passed away but for an occurrence which took place about a month subsequently. One of the officers of the shore-force received information that two large luggers, laden with brandy and tobacco from Guernsey, were expected the following night on some point of the coast between Hamble and Weston; and that as the cargoes were very valuable, a desperate resistance to the coast-guard, in the event of detection, had been organised. Our plan was soon arranged. The *Rose* was sent away with barely enough of men to handle her, and with the remainder of the crew, I, as soon as night fell, took up a position a little above Netley Abbey. Two other detachments of the coast-guard were posted along the shore at intervals of about a mile, all of course connected by signal-men not more than a hundred yards apart. There was a faint starlight, but the moon would not rise till near midnight; and from this circumstance, as well as from the state of the tides, we could pretty well calculate when to expect our friends, should they come at all. It was not long before we were quite satisfied, from the stealthy movements of a number of persons about the spot, that the information we had received was correct. Just after eleven o'clock a low, peculiar whistle, taken up from distance to distance, was heard; and by placing our ears to the ground, the quick jerk of oars in the rullocks was quite apparent. After about five minutes of eager restlessness, I gave the impatiently-expected order; we all emerged from our places of concealment, and with cautious but rapid steps advanced upon the by this time busy smugglers. The two luggers were beached upon the soft sand or mud, and between forty and fifty men were each receiving two three-gallon kegs, with which they speedied off to the carts in waiting at a little distance. There were also about twenty fellows ranged as a guard, all armed as efficiently as ourselves. I gave the word; but before we could close with the astonished desperadoes, they fired a pistol volley, by which one seaman, John Batley, a fine, athletic young man, was killed, and two others seriously wounded. This done, the scoundrels fled in all directions, hotly pursued of course. I was getting near one of them, when a lad, who was running by his side,

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suddenly turned, and raising a pistol, discharged it at my head. He fortunately missed his mark, though the whistle of the bullet was unpleasantly close. I closed with and caught the young rascal, who struggled desperately, and to my extreme surprise, I had almost written dismay, discovered that he was young Barnaby! It was not a time for words, and hastily consigning the boy to the custody of the nearest seaman, with a brief order to take care of him, I resumed the pursuit. A bootless one it proved. Favoured by their numbers, their perfect acquaintance with the hedge-and-ditch neighbourhood, the contrabandists all contrived to escape. The carts also got off, and our only captures were the boy, the luggers, which there had been no time to get off, and their cargoes, with the exception of the few kegs that had reached the carts.

The hunt after the dispersed smugglers was continued by the different parties who came in subsequently to our brush with them, so that after the two wounded seamen had been carried off on litters, and a sufficient guard left in the captured boats, only two men remained with me. The body of John Batley was deposited for the present in one of the luggers, and then the two sailors and myself moved forward to fetch with the prisoner, where I intended to place him in custody for the night.

The face of the lad was deadly pale, and I noticed that he had been painfully affected by the sight of the corpse; but when I addressed him, his expressive features assumed a scornful, defying expression. First ordering the two men to drop astern out of hearing, I said: 'You will be hanged for your share in this night's work, young man, depend upon it.'

'Hanged!' he exclaimed in a quick, nervous tone; 'hanged! You say that to frighten me! It was not I who shot the man! You know that; or perhaps,' he added with a kind of hysterical cry, 'perhaps you want to kill me as you did father.'

'I have no more inclination, my poor boy,' I answered, 'to injure you than I had to harm your father. Why, indeed, should I have borne him any ill-will?'

'Why should you? Oh I know very well!' 'You know more than I do then; but enough of this folly. I wish, I hardly know why, to save you. It was not you, I am quite aware, that fired the fatal shot, but that makes no difference as to your legal guilt. But I think if you could put us on the track of your associates, you might yourself escape.'

The lad's fine eyes perfectly lightened with scorn and indignation: 'Turn informer!' he exclaimed. 'Betray them that loved and trusted me! Never—if they could hang me a thousand times over!'

I made no answer, and nothing more was said till we had reached and were passing the Abbey ruins. The boy then abruptly stopped, and with quivering voice, whilst his eyes filled with tears, said: 'I should like to see my mother.'

'See your mother! There can be no particular objection to that; but she lives further on at Weston, does she not?'

'No, we have sold off, and moved to Aunt Diaper's, at Netley, up yonder. In a day or two we should have started for Hull, where mother's father's brother lives, and I was to have been 'prenticed to the captain of a Greenlander; but now,' he continued with an irrepressible outburst of grief and terror, 'Jack Ketch will, you say, be my master, and I shall be only 'prenticed to the gallows.'

'Why, if this be so, did your mother permit you to join the lawless desperadoes to whom you owe your present unhappy and degraded position?'

'Mother did not know of it; she thinks I am gone to Southampton to inquire about the day the vessel sails for Hull. Mother will die if I am hanged!' exclaimed the lad with a renewed burst of passionate grief; 'and surely you would not kill her?'

'It is not very likely I should wish to do so, considering that I have never seen her.'

'Oh yes—yes, you have!' he sharply rejoined. 'Then perhaps you do not know! Untie or cut these cords,' he added, approaching close to me and speaking in a low, quick whisper; 'give me a chance: mother's girl's name was Ellen Dible!'

Had the lad's fettered arm been free, and he had suddenly dealt me a blow with a knife or dagger, the stroke could not have been more sharp or terrible than these words conveyed.

'God of mercy!' I exclaimed, as the momentarily-arrested blood again shot through my heart with reactive violence, 'can this be true?'

'Yes, yes—true, quite true!' continued the boy, with the same earnest look and low, hurried speech. 'I saw, when your waistcoat flew open in the struggle just now, what was at the end of the black ribbon. You will give me a chance for mother's sake, wont you?'

A storm of grief, regret, remorse, was sweeping through my brain, and I could not for a while make any answer, though the lad's burning eyes continued fixed with fevered anxiety upon my face.

At last I said, gasped rather: 'I cannot release you—it is impossible; but all that can be done—all that can—can legally be done, shall be'—'The boy's countenance fell, and he was again deadly pale. 'You shall see your mother,' I added. 'Tell Johnson where to seek her; he is acquainted with Netley.' This was done, and the man walked briskly off upon his errand.

'Come this way,' I said, after a few minutes' reflection, and directing my steps towards the old ruined fort by the shore, built, I suppose, as a defence to the abbey against pirates. There was but one flight of steps to the summit, and no mode of egress save by the entrance from whence they led. 'I will relieve you of these cords while your mother is with you. Go up to the top of the fort. You will be unobserved, and we can watch here against any foolish attempt at escape.'

Ten minutes had not elapsed when the mother, accompanied by Johnson, and sobbing convulsively, appeared. Roberts hailed her, and after a brief explanation, she embraced the steps with tottering but hasty feet, to embrace her son. A quarter of an hour, she had been told, would be allowed for the interview.

The allotted time had passed, and I was getting impatient, when a cry from the summit of the fort or tower, as if for help to some one at a distance, roused and startled us. As we stepped out of the gateway, and looked upwards to ascertain the meaning of the sudden cry, the lad darted out and sped off with surprising speed. One of the men instantly snatched a pistol from his waistbelt, but at a gesture from me put it back. 'He cannot escape,' I said. 'Follow me, but use no unnecessary violence.' Finding that we gained rapidly upon him, the lad darted through a low, narrow gateway, into the interior of the abbey ruins, trusting, I imagined, to baffle us in the darkness and intricacy of the place. I just caught sight of him as he disappeared up a long flight of crumbling, winding steps, from which he issued through a narrow aperture upon a lofty wall, some five or six feet wide, and overgrown with grass and weeds. I followed in terrible anxiety, for I feared that in his desperation he would spring off and destroy himself. I shouted loudly to him for God's sake to stop. He did so within a few feet of the end of the wall. I ran quickly towards him, and as I neared him he fell on his knees, threw away his hat, and revealed the face of—Ellen Dible!

I stopped, bewildered, dizzy, paralysed. Doubtless the mellowing radiance of the night softened or concealed the ravages which time must have imprinted on her features; for as I gazed upon the spirit-beauty of her upturned, beseeching countenance, the old time came back upon me with a power and intensity which

an hour before I could not have believed possible. The men hailed repeatedly from below, but I was too bewildered, too excited, to answer: their shouts, and the young mother's supplicating sobs—she seemed scarcely older than when I parted from her—sounded in my ears like the far-off cries and murmurs of a bewildering, chaotic dream. She must have gathered hope and confidence from the emotion I doubtless exhibited, for as soon as the confusion and ringing in my brain had partially subsided, I could hear her say: 'You will save my boy—my only son: for my sake you will save him?'

Another shout from the men below demanded if I had got the prisoner. 'Ay, ay,' I mechanically replied, and they immediately hastened to join us.

'Which way—which way is he gone?' I asked as the seamen approached.

She instinctively caught my meaning: 'By the shore to Weston,' she hurriedly answered; 'he will find a boat there.'

The men now came up: 'The chase has led us astray,' I said: 'look there.'

'His mother, by jingo!' cried Johnson. 'They must have changed clothes!'

'Yes: the boy is off—to—Hamble, I have no doubt. You both follow in that direction: I'll pursue by the Weston and Itchen road.'

The men started off to obey this order, and as they did so, I heard her broken murmur of 'Bless you, Robert—bless you!' I turned away, faint, reeling with excitement, muttered a hasty farewell, and with disordered steps and flaming pulse hurried homewards. The mother I never saw again: the son at whose escape from justice I thus weakly, it may be criminally, connived, I met a few years ago in London. He is the captain of a first-class ship in the Australian trade, and a smarter sailor I think I never beheld. His mother is still alive, and lives with her daughter-in-law at Chelsea.

A BIBLIOGRAPHIC CURIOSITY.

PUBLISHERS in this country are very much in the habit of congratulating themselves on the magnitude of their undertakings. We do not disparage the efforts of this class of tradesmen, but it is proper they should know that not one of them has produced works of such grandeur as have issued from foreign houses. A very remarkable exemplification of continental enterprise, such as we have never been able to match, is found in an Atlas published by the Bleaus of Amsterdam about two centuries ago; and of this now rare and curious work we desire to offer some account.

Bleaus's Atlas is a collection of maps of a large folio size, comprehended in fourteen volumes—think of an atlas in fourteen volumes folio, Mr English mapseller!—and these volumes, bound in old vellum, profusely but tastefully gilded, usually occupy the lower shelves in some little-frequented part of public libraries. Few libraries, indeed, can boast the possession of a Bleau; for much of the original impression was unfortunately destroyed by fire in the premises of the publishers, and few sets of this great work reached this country. The British Museum has probably one; that which we have seen rests in an obscure nook of the Advocates' Library in Edinburgh, not discovered by ordinary visitors.

This marvellously fine old atlas consists not exclusively of maps, but combines a system of geography and topography which, according to the knowledge of the period, left little to be desired. The extent and minuteness of the information conveyed, along with the finish and accuracy of the maps, fill us with admiration of the industry and enterprise of the Dutch pub-

lishers of the seventeenth century. The Bleaus were great men of their day. They were two in number, father and son; the former named William, the latter John, Bleau—or as the name is Latinised, Blavius. William Bleau was born in 1571, and died in 1688, leaving but a small part of his great work completed. It was continued by his son, who issued the last volume, containing the general cosmography, in 1695. Like the Elzevirs and other Dutch publishers of that day, the Bleaus were great scholars, and took a leading share in the literary department of their works, surrounding themselves with a band of able assistants. Their geography and science are both, it will readily be believed, imperfect enough when measured by the modern estimate. But it was not the fashion then to stick to pure scientific details. Writers gave out all that could be said, and sometimes all that could be imagined, on any subject discussed by them: so the geographical details of this eminent work are filled with notices of national manners and customs, and of superstitions; with anecdotes of distinguished personages, curious events in history, and the like—all told in a Latinity which varies in its purity with the various authors who had to compose the separate parts. We know scarcely any work where an investigator of curious legendary lore is more likely to be repaid.

It may be questioned whether it may have been favourable to the student of geography in those days, but it is very amusing to the lounging investigator of the present, to study the groups of allegorical figures which surround the maps. The Dutch, if it be denied that they reached the higher developments of the fine arts, could never tolerate positively bad art. All the drawing and colouring is therefore well executed, some of it of at least a high, though not the highest, style of art; and so we have group after group of venerable bearded men, or of chubby Dutch babies, and comely but perhaps hardly elegant Dutch women. With a ring of such personages, with angels and mythological beings interwoven, the first geographical map of the series—the two hemispheres—is surrounded. It surprises the observer by a closer resemblance than he is prepared to expect to the maps of the world in the nineteenth century. The general contour is so like, that it would require considerable geographical knowledge to note the discrepancies. America, for instance, appears to be quite accurately laid down; but on close inspection it appears that California is an island, and the outline is shadowed off as it approaches the Oregon territory. The outline of Australia is not completed, and the end merely of Van Diemen's Land is seen in the far ocean, shaded off into vagueness; but for a century afterwards it was not better represented in our maps, and it surprises one that in so early a publication any faint image of New Zealand should be given—an indistinct line of coast with the name *Zelandia Nova*.

In the same volume, commonly placed as the first of the series, there is an extremely curious set of plates, all the more interesting that they have scarcely a legitimate place there. They are connected with the lonely island of Hwen, and the observatory which Tycho Brahe, by the munificence of his prince, was enabled to erect there. The elder Bleau was a pupil of Tycho, worked with him in his observatory, and seems to have been led by a feeling of reverence to commemorate the master and the scene of his triumphant labours. The edifice was called Uraniburg, or the City of the Stars; and from the views and elevations preserved by the geographer, it may be seen that it was truly a palace. The inner building consists of a cluster of towers and pinnacles in that mixture of Gothic and classic which we see in Heriot's Hospital at Edinburgh, and the Fredericksborg Palace in Denmark. Indeed, the building has a striking resemblance to Heriot's Hospital, and one could imagine it to be designed by the same artist,

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whoever he may have been. The style seems, curiously enough, to have been peculiar to Scotland and Denmark. From the four corners of the edifice four avenues pass through rich garden-grounds, all in symmetrical patterns, which occupy the nearest space round the palace of science. Next after these come shrubberies, with quaint and highly-decorated little edifices in them, which might be supposed to be pleasure-houses, but probably were devoted to some of the scientific purposes of the establishment. Outside of all, and including apparently a wide area, is a great strong wall with bastions. Surely the illustrious astronomer did not require to be fortified from external attack while he read the stars? It is probable that the fortification, like the sentinel at some great official person's door, was intended to impose awe, and mark the high respect of the monarch for the philosopher. Such, as exhibited to us in these magnificent plates, is the character of a building of which we believe some mouldering fragments still remain. But the most interesting of all these illustrations shews us, by a panoramic view of the interior, the philosopher himself in the middle of his labours. Perched in their several departments, the assistants are grouped together, making observations with the instruments, or preparing reports, while Tycho, as the lord of all, sits on a chair of state in the centre—calm, majestic, magnificently attired, but with the greater magnificence of commanding intellect in his countenance. The age of forty is that at which the artist professes to represent him; but the grizzled beard and deep furrows on the brow and cheeks would indicate a more advanced period of life.

A very interesting volume of this great work contains the plans of cities, chiefly in the Netherlands and Northern Germany. They are very full and minute, but they have an interest even beyond their topographical importance in the curious representations of local and domestic customs. The Dutchman's garden is laid out before us to the minutest tulip. Here is a game at bowls, there a party assembled in the luthaus or pleasure-house. The human figure is represented in every variety of the costume of the age; and as if the artist desired to give us an opportunity of knowing everything, he spreads before us the contents of a bleaching-green. Clean linen was scarcely at that time known throughout the rest of Europe, but there we see spread out, just as they might be at the present day, the shirts, great and small, of the several grades of the family. In all domestic arrangements the Netherlands have been a century in advance of the rest of the world; and it is perhaps to their pride in this civilisation that we may attribute the disposition of the Dutch to make the world so well acquainted through art with their domestic habits. Philip de Comines tells us, that when the Count Palatine of the Rhine visited the Duke of Burgundy at Brussels, 'the duke's servants upbraided the Germans for their nastiness and incivility in laying their dirty clothes and their boots upon these rich beds, and accusing them of want of neatness and consideration.' And thence, according to the chronicler, arose a national quarrel.

Scotland would not at that time have so easily borne a minute exposition of its domestic arrangements; yet perhaps the volume dedicated to that country is the most interesting department of Bleau's Atlas. It contains a series of maps, partly in counties—as Forfar and Aberdeen; partly in provinces—as Teviotdale, Lennox, &c. They are extremely full and minute, affording a store of topographical knowledge of the most valuable kind, enhanced by a very copious letterpress description. The names of places are professedly given in Latin, and the manner in which the translation has been effected is in some instances rather curious. Thus we have Godscroft transformed into *Theager*, Horsburgh into *Hypocaustron*, and Smithfield into *Fabri-*

campum. This department of the Atlas was committed to the charge of a Scottish gentleman distinguished for his birth as well as his abilities—Sir Robert Gordon of Straloch. It was a time when art and literature lived much by royal patronage and distinction, and Bleau applied to Charles I. to appoint a proper person to superintend the Atlas of Scotland. The king appointed Gordon, issuing a rescript to this effect: 'Having lately seen certain charts of divers shires of this our ancient kingdom, sent here from Amsterdam to be corrected and helpt in the defects thereof, and being informed of your sufficiency in that art, and of your love both to learning and to the credit of your nation, we have therefore thought fit hereby earnestly to entreat you to take so much pains as to revise the said charts, and to help them in such things as you find deficient therein, that they may be sent back by the direction of our chancellor to Holland; which, as the same will be honourable for yourself, so shall it do us good and acceptable service; and if occasion present, we shall not be unmindful thereof. From our Palace at Holyrood House, the 8th October 1641.' So important were his labours deemed, that Gordon was specially protected by both parties during the wild times of the civil wars, and was by a truly marvellous generosity excused from taking a side. A special act of parliament was passed to exempt him from subsidies and quartering of soldiers, and many orders were issued to protect him from the rapacity or tyranny of the commanders of troops. Thus in the midst of this wild turmoil the geographer and statistic quietly went on with his work. He preserved his strict neutrality; and perhaps he was all the more successful in doing so after the ascendancy of the Covenanters, since he was at heart a Cavalier. There are many curious antiquarian inquiries in Gordon's portion of the Atlas. He is the author of a history of his family, and it was for some time understood that he had left behind him the history of his own times. A manuscript in two folio volumes, in the Advocates' Library, was long believed to be the identical work, and stands lettered on the back 'Straloch's MS.' It was since discovered, however, that this was a compilation by a writer named Mam, the editor of an edition of Buchanan's History, who had intended to publish it as a history of the great civil war. It had so far a connection with Gordon of Straloch, that it was chiefly compiled from a manuscript left by his son Thomas Gordon, parson of Rothiemay. A manuscript of Thomas Gordon's own work has been discovered, and it has been printed for the Spalding Club, under the title, 'History of Scots Affairs from 1637 to 1641.'

To return to the Atlas. We have stated that the Scottish maps are very full and minute. Their history is curious, and goes further back than Gordon's connection with the work. Timothy Pont, of whom little more is known than that his father was a judge of the Court of Session, and that he was an enthusiast in topography, left behind him a quantity of maps and draughts of various parts of Scotland. Sir Robert Sibbald, a man of kindred habits and acquirements, in a notebook about Scottish authors left among his manuscripts, states that Pont took long pedestrian journeys to acquire his topographical information. Bishop Nicholson says of him, that 'he was by nature and education a complete mathematician, and the first projector of a Scotch atlas. To that great purpose he personally surveyed all the several counties and isles of the kingdom, took draughts of them upon the spot, and added such cursory observations upon the monuments of antiquity and other curiosities as were proper for the furnishing out of future descriptions. He was unfortunately surprised by death, to the inestimable loss of his country, when he had wellnigh finished his papers.' Pont's original draughts are carefully preserved in the Advocates' Library. In the days of the Ordnance Survey, it is interesting to observe these labours of one enthusiastic

and laborious man. They are extremely minute and precise, and give one the idea that they have been the fruit of an enormous amount of personal exertion. It is scarcely possible, indeed, to believe that one man, by actual survey, could have accomplished them. They are of course very valuable as topographical relics, and in one point they are extremely curious, in shewing many places in the Highland districts to have been inhabited which are now deserted. Thus there are many names of farms and villages now unknown, the inhabitants having so long left them that there was none to hand down the name.

WHAT HAS BECOME OF THE PIEMAN?

A PENNY for a pie! In the records of our individual experience, this is probably the most ancient species of barter—the first gentle and welcome induction to the dry details of commerce, and one eminently calculated to impress upon the infant minds of a trading population the primary principles of exchange, of which a *quid pro quo* forms the universal basis. We had imagined, upon the first view of our subject, that the fabrication and consumption of pies must have been a custom as ancient as cookery itself, and have ranked among the very first achievements of the gastronomic art. Upon careful investigation, however, we find ourselves to have been mistaken in this idea. We have not been able to discover among the revelations to which the Rosetta Stone surrendered a key, any authority for supposing that among all the butlers and bakers of all the Pharaohs, there ever existed one who knew how to prepare a pie for the royal banquet. No; it was reserved for the Greeks, the masters of civilisation and the demigods of art, who brought every species of refinement to its highest pitch, to add the invention of pies and pie-crust to the catalogue of their immortal triumphs. Their *agárijas* (the word passed unchanged into Roman use) was an aggregation of succulent meats baked in a farinaceous crust, probably somewhat resembling in form a venison pasty of the present day, and was the first combination of the kind, so far at least as we know, ever submitted to the appetite of the gourmand. We have no intention of pursuing the history of this great discovery from its first dawn in some Athenian kitchen to its present universal estimation among all civilised eaters. We must pass the pies of all nations, from the monkey-pie of Central Africa, with the head of the baked semi-homo emerging spectrally from the upper crust, to the *patés* of Strasburg, the abnormally swollen livers of whose tormented geese roam the wide world to avenge upon gluttonous man the infamous tortures inflicted upon their original proprietors: we must pass, too, the thousand-and-one ingenious inventions which adorn the pages of Mrs Glass and Rumbold, by means of which dyspepsias are produced *secundum artem*, and the valetudinarian is accustomed to retard his convalescence according to the most approved and fashionable mode. The great pie of 1850, prepared by the ingenious Soyer, at the cost of a hundred guineas, for the especial delectation of municipal stomachs at York, is, likewise, altogether out of our way. Our business is with the pie that is sold for a penny, and sold in London. Let us add, moreover, that we treat only of the pie which is fairly worth a penny, leaving altogether out of our category the flimsy sophistries of your professed confectioner.

From time immemorial the wandering pieman was a prominent character in the highways and byways

of London. He was generally a merry dog, and was always found where merriment was going on. Furnished with a tray about a yard square, either carried upon his head or suspended by a strap in front of his breast, he scrupled not to force his way through the thickest crowd, knowing that the very centre of action was the best market for his wares. He was a gambler, both from inclination and principle, and would toss with his customers, either by the dallying shilli-shally process of 'best five in nine,' the tricky manoeuvre of 'best two in three,' or the desperate dash of 'sudden death!' in which latter case the first toss was destiny—a pie for a halfpenny, or your halfpenny gone for nothing; but he invariably declined the mysterious process of 'the odd man,' not being altogether free from suspicion on the subject of collusion between a couple of hungry customers. We meet with him frequently in old prints; and in Hogarth's 'March to Finchley,' there he stands in the very centre of the crowd, grinning with delight at the adroitness of one robbery, while he is himself the victim of another. We learn from this admirable figure by the greatest painter of English life, that the pieman of the last century perambulated the streets in professional costume; and we gather further, from the burly dimensions of his wares, that he kept his trade alive by the laudable practice of giving 'a good pennyworth for a penny.' Justice compels us to observe, that his successors of a later generation have not been very conscientious observers of this maxim. The varying price of flour, alternating with a sliding-scale, probably drove some of them to their wits' end; and perhaps this cause more than any other operated in imparting that complexion to their productions which made them resemble the dead body of a penny pie, and which in due time lost them favour with the discerning portion of their customers. Certain it is that the perambulating pie business in London fell very much into disrepute and contempt for several years before the abolition of the corn-laws and the advent of free trade. Opprobrious epithets were hurled at the wandering merchant as he paraded the streets and alleys—epithets which were in no small degree justified by the clammy and clay-like appearance of his goods. By degrees the profession got into disfavour, and the pieman either altogether disappeared, or merged in a dealer in foreign nuts, fruits, and other edibles which barred the suspicion of sophistication.

Still the relish for pies survived in the public taste, and the willing penny was as ready as ever to guard the man who, on fair grounds, would meet the general desire. No sooner, therefore, was the sliding-scale gone to the dogs, and a fair prospect of permanence offered to the speculator, in the guarantee of something like a fixed cost in the chief ingredient used, than up sprung almost simultaneously in every district of the metropolis a new description of pie-shops, which rushed at once into popularity and prosperity. Capital had recognised the leading want of the age, and brought the appliances of wealth and energy to supply it. Avoiding, on the one hand, the glitter and pretension of the confectioner, and on the other the employment of adulterating or inferior materials, they produced an article which the populace devoured with universal commendation, to the gradual but certain profit of the projectors. The peripatetic merchant was pretty generally driven out of the field by the superiority of the article with which he had to compete. He could not manufacture on a small scale in a style to rival his new antagonists, and he could not purchase of them to sell again, because they would not allow him a living

margin—truth, the which w These teristic That the luxury t can be m that they low ren versal p they are indeed, unfavour customo neighbor much in quented the win the fine a large charged and th napkins stool, c dallying 'Pay f day. but you We hav ration v do we c pars tip them to fore in cord. the nu the free of bun mer n and points absolut is a m penny to spe like or has be Look as a gr ing ti fusion in wh and c differ What every blisf for su titut made adver stand affect the w ever, minu in b looki clean bees as th ants plum to b astor

margin — boasting, as it would appear with perfect truth, that they sold at a small and infinitesimal profit, which would not bear division.

These penny-pie shops now form one of the characteristic features of the London trade in comestibles. That they are an immense convenience as well as a luxury to a very large section of the population, there can be no doubt. It might be imagined, at first view, that they would naturally seek a cheap locality and a low rental. This, however, is by no means the universal practice. In some of the chief lines of route they are to be found in full operation; and it is rare indeed, unless at seasons when the weather is very unfavourable, that they are not seen well filled with customers. They abound especially in the immediate neighbourhood of omnibuses and cab stations, and very much in the thoroughfares and short-cuts most frequented by the middle and lower classes. But though the window may be of plate-glass, behind which piles of the finest fruit, joints, and quarters of the best meat, a large dish of silver eels, and a portly china bowl charged with a liberal heap of minced-meat, with here and there a few pies, lie temptingly arranged upon napkins of snowy whiteness, yet there is not a chair, stool, or seat of any kind to be found within. No dallying is looked for, nor would it probably be allowed. 'Pay for your pie, and go,' seems the order of the day. True, you may eat it there, as thousands do; but you must eat it standing, and clear of the counter. We have more than once witnessed this interesting operation with mingled mirth and satisfaction; nay, what do we care?—take the confession for what it is worth—*pars ipsi fuimus*—we have eaten our pies (and paid for them too, no credit being given)—*in loco*, and are therefore in a condition to guarantee the truth of what we record. With few exceptions (we include ourselves among the number), there are no theoretical philosophers among the frequenters of the penny-pie shop. The philosophy of bun-eating, of which an epitome was given in a former number of the Journal, may be very profound, and may present, as we think it does, some difficult points; but the philosophy of penny-pie eating is absolutely next to *nil*. The customer of the pie-shop is a man (if he is not a boy) with whom a penny is a penny, and a pie is a pie, who, when he has the former to spend or the latter to eat, goes through the ceremony like one impressed with the settled conviction that he has business in hand which it behoves him to attend to. Look at him as he stands in the centre of the floor, erect as a grenadier, turning his busy mouth full upon the living tide that rushes along Holborn! Of shame or confusion of face in connection with the enviable position in which he stands he has not the remotest conception, and could as soon be brought to comprehend the differential calculus as to entertain a thought of it. What, we ask, would philosophy do for him? Still every customer is not so happily organised, and so blissfully insensible to the attacks of false shame; and for such as are unprepared for the public gaze, or constitutionally averse from it, a benevolent provision is made by a score of old play-bills stuck against the adverse wall, or swathing the sacks of flour which stand ready for use, and which they may peruse, or affect to peruse, in silence, munching their penny worths the while. The main body of the pie-eaters are, however, perfectly at their ease, and pass the very few minutes necessary for the discussion of their purchases in bantering compliments with three or four good-looking lasses, the very incarnations of good-temper and cleanly tidiness, who from morn to night are as busy as bees in extricating the pies from their metallic moulds, as they are demanded by the customers. These assistants lead no lazy life, but they are without exception plump and healthy-looking, and would seem (if we are to believe the report of an employer) to have an astonishing tendency to the parish church of the district

in which they officiate, our informant having been bereaved of three by marriage in the short space of six months. It lays are necessary in most establishments on the main routes, as the shops are open all night long, seldom closing much before three in the morning when situated in the neighbourhood of a theatre or a cab-stand. Of the amount of business done in the course of a year it is not easy to form an estimate. Some pie-houses are known to consume as much flour as a neighbouring baker standing in the same track. The baker makes ninety quartern loaves from the sack of flour, and could hardly make a living upon less than a dozen sacks a week; but as the proportion borne by the crust of a penny-pie to a quartern loaf is a mystery which we have not yet succeeded in penetrating, we are wanting in the elements of an exact calculation.

The establishment of these shops has by degrees prodigiously increased the number of pie-eaters and the consumption of pies. Thousands and tens of thousands who would decline the handling of a scalding hot morsel in the public street, will yet steal to the corner of a shop, and in front of an old play-bill, delicately dandling the titbit on their finger-tips till it cools to the precise temperature at which it is so delicious to swallow—'snatch a fearful joy.' The tradesman, too, in the immediate vicinity, soon learns to appreciate the propinquity of the pie-shop, in the addition it furnishes to a cold dinner, and for half the sum it would have cost him if prepared in his own kitchen. Many a time and oft have we dropped in, upon the strength of a general invitation, at the dinner-table of an indulgent bibliophile, and recognised the undeniable *patés* of 'over the way' following upon the heels of the cold sirloin. With artisans out of work, and with town-travellers of small trade, the pie-shop is a halting-place, its productions presenting a cheap substitute for a dinner. Few purchases are made before twelve o'clock in the day; in fact the shutters are rarely pulled down much before eleven; yet even then business is carried on for nearly twenty hours out of the twenty-four. About noon the current of custom sets in, and all hands are busy till four or five o'clock; after which there is a pause, or rather a relaxation, until evening, when the various bands of operatives, as they are successively released from work, again renew the tide. As these disappear, the numberless nightly exhibitions, lecture-rooms, mechanics' institutes, concerts, theatres and casinos, pour forth their motley hordes, of whom a large and hungry section find their way to the pie-house as the only available resource—the public-houses being shut up for the night, and the lobster-rooms, oyster saloons, 'shades,' 'coal-holes,' and 'cider-cellars,' too expensive for the means of the multitude. After these come the cab-drivers, who, having conveyed to their homes the more moneyed classes of sight-seers and playgoers, return to their stands in the vicinity of the shop, and now consider that they may conscientiously indulge in a refreshment of eel-pies, winding up with a couple of 'fruiters,' to the amount at least of the sum of which they may have been able to cheat their fares.

Throughout the summer months the pie trade flourishes with unabated vigour. Each successive fruit, as it ripens and comes to market, adds a fresh impetus to the traffic. As autumn waxes, every week supplies a new attraction and a delicious variety; as it wanes into winter, good store of apples are laid up for future use; and so soon as Jack Frost sets his cold toes upon the pavement, the delicate odour of mince-meat assails the passer-by, and reminds him that Christmas is coming, and that the pie-man is ready for him. It is only in the early spring that the pie-shop is under a temporary cloud. The apples of the past year are well-nigh gone, and the few that remain have lost their succulence, and are dry and flavourless. This is the precise season when, as the pie-man in 'Pick-

wick' too candidly observed, 'fruits is out, and cats is in.' Now there is an unaccountable prejudice against cats among the pie-devouring population of the metropolis: we are superior to it ourselves, and can therefore afford to mention it dispassionately, and to express our regret that any species of commerce, much more one so grateful to the palate, and so convenient to the purse, should periodically suffer declension through the prevalence of an unfounded prejudice. Certain it is that penny-pie eating does materially decline about the early spring season; and it is certain too, that of late years, about the same season, a succession of fine Tabbies of our own have mysteriously disappeared. Attempts are made with rhubarb to combat the depression of business; but success in this matter is very partial—the generality of consumers being impressed with the popular notion that rhubarb is physic, and that physic is not fruit. But relief is at hand: the showers and sunshine of May bring the gooseberry to market; pies resume their importance; and the pie-man, backed by an inexhaustible store of a fruit grateful to every English palate, commences the campaign with renewed energy, and bids defiance for the rest of the year to the mutations of fortune.

We shall close this sketch with a legend of the day, for the truth of which, however, we do not personally vouch. It was related and received with much gusto at an annual supper lately given by a large pie proprietor to his assembled hands:—

Some time since, so runs the current narrative, the owner of a thriving mutton-pie concern, which, after much difficulty, he had succeeded in establishing with borrowed capital, died before he had well extricated himself from the responsibilities of debt. The widow carried on the business after his decease, and thrived so well, that a speculating baker on the opposite side of the way made her the offer of his hand. The lady refused, and the enraged suitor, determined on revenge, immediately converted his baking into an opposition pie-shop; and acting on the principle universal among London bakers, of doing business for the first month or two at a loss, made his pies twice as big as he could honestly afford to make them. The consequence was that the widow lost her custom, and was hastening fast to ruin, when a friend of her late husband, who was also a small creditor, paid her a visit. She detailed her grievance to him, and lamented her lost trade and fearful prospects. 'Ho, ho!' said her friend, 'that 'ere's the move, is it? Never you mind, my dear. If I don't git your trade agin, there aint no snakes, mark me—that's all!' So saying he took his leave.

About eight o'clock the same evening, when the baker's new pie-shop was crammed to overflowing, and the principal was below superintending the production of a new batch, in walks the widow's friend in the costume of a kennel-raker, and elbowing his way to the counter, dabs down upon it a brace of huge dead cats, vociferating at the same time to the astonished damsel in attendance: 'Tell your master, my dear, as how them two makes six-and-thirty this week, and say I'll bring t'other four to-morrow afternoon!' With that he swaggered out and went his way. So powerful was the prejudice against cat-mutton among the population of that neighbourhood, that the shop was clear in an instant, and the floor was seen covered with hastily-abandoned specimens of every variety of segments of a circle. The spirit-shop at the corner of the street experienced an unusually large demand for 'goes' of brandy, and interjectional ejaculations not purely grammatical were not merely audible but visible too in the district. It is averred that the ingenious expedient of the widow's friend, founded as it was upon a profound knowledge of human prejudices, had the desired effect of restoring 'the balance of trade.' The widow recovered her commerce; the

resentful baker was done as brown as if he had been shut up in his own oven; and the friend who brought about this measure of justice received the hand of the lady as a reward for his interference.

SOUTHERN GATES OF EGYPT.

THERE is scarcely any place in Egypt more picturesque in appearance, or more interesting, than what may be called its Southern Gates—the whole neighbourhood of the first Cataracts. I have read many descriptions thereof executed with great skill, but not one appears to me to convey a correct idea at the same time of the general characteristics of the scene and of the minutest details. It may be that success is impossible, or it may be that travellers have hurried on too rapidly to other classical sites. This last supposition is not unlikely to be true. I have known people 'do' the whole district in twenty-four hours. For my own part, during the period I remained there, new objects of interest, new points of view, seemed perpetually presenting themselves; and when I took my departure, it was with the impression that had I remained twice as long, no yearning for fresh excitement would have arisen.

We had passed through a narrow defile of rock the previous evening, and moored at Akabah, a village celebrated for its dates. The morning came bright and sunny, but cool. A gentle north wind filled the sails, and soon wafted us against the rippling current to within sight of Essouan, or rather of the hills and ruins that overlook it, for the town itself was concealed by palm-groves. A white-walled palace standing alone on the eastern bank, and a great ruined convent half way up the sandy declivity to the west, were the first buildings that appeared near at hand. A slight turn brought us in sight of the point of Stephanine, its woods and thickets sparkling in the sun, the approach seemingly impossible by reason of the huge black rocks piled as if fragments of a ruined dike across the river. To the right a winding branch strewn with boulders appeared to lead away into the desert; but to the left a long line of boats indicated the mooring ground. The great sail was soon got in; and the foresail flapping took us quietly along between two enormous rocks, covered with hieroglyphics and figures of ancient kings and heroes, into a kind of lake or harbour, defended by breakers on the north; the sandy bank covered with old boats, and backed by trees, on the east; the island on the west; and closing in to the south, so as to leave only a narrow passage between an eminence topped with Saracenic ruins, and the great shattered wall of hewn stone supposed to mark the site of the Nilometer.

There was bustle on the beach: our friends coming to salute us, and point out a convenient place where to 'peg up'; boatmen exchanging salutations; donkeys, with real civilised saddles, and very uncivilised drivers, crowding down for employment; shipwrights hammering; fifty men, with a measured grunt, hauling a boat ashore; further on, a large space covered with bales of merchandise, sheds, and groups of travellers—so that the border town of Egypt, which, by the way, was still not visible, promised to be at least a lively place of halt. It turned out to be so in fact; and I should have no objection to go back and spend a month or so there, breathing the purest air in the world beneath the finest sky.

Every one knows by report that there are two famous islands in this vicinity, separated by several miles of rapids: one above, called Phihe; and one below called Stephanine. The latter, as I have said, now lay opposite to us, just allowing the white hilly Libyan desert to appear through its groves; but our curiosity was chiefly directed towards the former, and we could scarcely refrain from imitating the native travellers, and hurrying off at once to explore it. There was plenty of time before us, however; and restraining our impa-

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science, we resolved to persevere in our old method of making ourselves at home in a place ere we went in quest of its neighbouring objects of attraction.

The modern town of Essouan contains some four or five thousand inhabitants. A principal street, as usual, is devoted to the bazaar—not very remarkable for the richness of the goods exposed for sale. In the neighbourhood, especially to the north, are a variety of dusty-looking gardens divided by dusty lanes; but the general effect is that of barrenness and desolation. To the south is a city of ruins—the ancient Arabic Esouan, with its remains of elegant arched buildings stretching far and wide; and beyond, where the ground rises, the commencement of a vast cemetery. Our first walk was in this direction; and we had soon got clear of the new town and the old, and were in the midst of tombs and black rocks, here and there bearing inscriptions. On the summit of the hill are two mosques—one ruined, and one glaring with fresh whitewash. The latter is sacred to the Seventy-seven Sheiks, and is regarded with peculiar respect both by the residents and all true Moslem travellers. From its neighbourhood a fine view is obtained of the winding course of the Nile to the north; of the desert rising into crags on either side; of the town and its dusty groves; and above all, of the great black valley along which runs the land-route to Phihe. The whole breadth of this valley is covered with shattered mausolea and an infinity of head-stones, generally in good preservation, with long mysterious-looking Cufic inscriptions. Further on to the south, it seems encumbered with isolated rocks that, thickening in the distance, at length close up the view. On the most conspicuous heights around, tombs of saints, ancient and modern, are perched like watch-towers.

We returned through part of the new town, detecting fragments of ancient buildings in the walls of several of the houses; and coming down to the river north of our mooring-ground, examined an old Roman bath that projects like a mole into the water. From this the road or path goes through trees, beneath a huge piece of rock, covered with hieroglyphical inscriptions and figures, not of very finished workmanship, and probably recording the visits of mere travellers like ourselves. It could not but strike us that these ancient pilgrims surpassed in taste the moderns. They chose the face of precipices, the naked sides of water-washed boulders, whereon to write the enduring memorial of their visit. But their more civilised successors chose the most conspicuous part of the most elegant and ornamented monument, and are not content unless the name of Smith defaces an oval, or destroys the expressive touches which mark the countenance of Isis or Osiris.

Next day we resolved to extend the circle of our wanderings, and started again southwards. This time we traversed the whole length of the cemetery along the centre of the valley, gazing with admiration at the elegant cupolas, finely-turned arches, and graceful pillars, which, though now all broken and deserted, testified amply to the taste that had presided over their creation. One of the innumerable headstones that dot the ground appeared recently shattered by a musket-bullet. There was a story put to the purpose: A Turkish soldier, in a fit of drunken impiety, had fired at the stone; but even before the missile had sped to its mark, he had fallen down dead, slain by the spirit of the buried sheik—for none but holy men lie in this ground. A friend explained that the story had its origin in a true occurrence, of which the hero was a Frank traveller. He had fired last year at a crow, broken the stone by accident, and his gun bursting, he lost the use of his hand. This matter-of-fact statement would have satisfied me, but I find that in reality the anecdote is an old one, being mentioned by writers twenty years ago.

Having got beyond the tombs, we found the country become more wild and savage at every step. Not a tree, not a shrub, not a blade of grass, not a lichen met the eye. All was black, crumbly rock on every side. Beneath our feet was sand. The hills, broken into fantastic shapes, formed hollows, ravines, valleys, winding away in inextricable confusion. We seemed to have got into the extinguished crater of a vast volcano. Yet there was nothing horrid in the scene, because the unclouded sun was there, streaming down its dazzling light on every object, and imparting, as it were, life to desolation. A vulture now and then sailed heavily from crag to crag; two or three hawks ascended in their spiral flight; a dozen or so of glossy black crows looked pertly at us from boulders bearing the names of the Pharaohs, or strutted with an air of assumed gentility on the ground; and some small black and white birds, with sparrows and desert larks, fluttered in busy idleness about.

We turned off at length to the right into a rugged ravine that seemed to lead nowhere. But after scrambling along for some time, we actually saw the tops of some waving palms rising, it seemed, out of a fissure in the earth; and presently getting to the summit of the pass, came in full view of a little village of little houses, surrounded by little gardens, nestling in the midst of horrid inky rocks, on the borders, we thought, of a little lake that dazzled our eyes with its brightness. We went on, surprised and silent, and soon got into the clean streets, formed by the neat garden mud-walls and the still neater fronts of the houses, and could scarcely believe that we were in Egypt. It was some time before our fancies were persuaded that we were in the Shellabe village on the banks of one of the winding branches of the Nile.

The name of the place was Mahatta. It was inhabited, we learned, entirely by that peculiar race of people called Shellabes, from Shellal, the Arabic name by which the Cataracts are known. They are evidently of Berber or Nubian descent, but intermingle very little with the parent stock, and seem to me superior in personal appearance and intelligence. They depend entirely for their living on work connected with the Cataracts—as tracking up or taking down boats, transporting merchandise, &c.—and seem to make a good thing of it. I admired their taste in selecting this lonely spot as the site of their village, although there are but a few basketsful of earth in the neighbourhood. There never was a more romantic situation. Opposite rises a lofty desolate island; behind is a lofty desolate ridge. North and south barren rocks close in the view. The current of the river is scarcely perceptible to the eye, unless you stoop over the slippery rocks which lead down from the village; but it sparkles so gaily in the sun as to supply the place of almost all the other elements of beauty in a landscape.

In passing through the village, we saw only a few women, some of elegant form and agreeable features, standing in the streets; but when we had sat down on a great rock overlooking the stream, a crowd of little chattering children came round us, all offering something for sale. The parents were wise enough to know that these pretty urchins would make better bargains than themselves. One had a couple of spears with long blades and light handles, covered with the skin of the *warren*, or great water-lizard; others had sticks of hardwood fancifully ornamented with leather and brass wire. They sat around, talking with us in a very independent manner—at least such as could speak a little Arabic—the others chirping among themselves like birds, I believe in a dialect of the Berberi. Mighty curiosity, to the forgetfulness of all ideas of gain, was excited by the sight of a watch; and when they were permitted to listen to the ticking, there was actually a moment of awestricken silence. But they soon returned to the charge, urging us to buy their curiosities,

not at all in an importunate tone, but in a half-manly half-childish way inexpressibly amusing. Of course we felt bound to comply, and went away at last with many kind wishes for our safety. Even in the villages where the children have been taught, as in some parts of Egypt, to assail the travellers for *backshish*, they bless you before you give, and indeed whether you give or not. A little fellow came up to me, holding out his hand. 'If it please God, mayst thou go on thy way in peace!' 'If it please God!' said I, pretending to misunderstand him. He ran along by my stirrup with the same gesture and the same indirect form of asking. 'Why should I give thee anything?' inquired I. He smiled at the absurdity of the question, and repeated: 'If it please God, mayst thou go in peace!' I was deaf to his demand. He became more earnest, still sticking to the same form. My donkey began to go. He thought that as I had spoken I must relent, and followed. Finding me, however, obdurate to the last, he dropped behind, still murmuring, though with a disappointed tone: 'If it please God, mayst thou go on thy way in peace!' Next time I passed he kept aloof and remained silent, looking, however, benevolently at me. I called and gave him something, and was rewarded by his stereotyped good wishes for a prosperous journey in a very energetic tone. As he never went beyond these words, perhaps he knew no more of Arabic; but this polite and winning way of begging is general.

The donkeys used by travellers at Essouan generally belong to the respectable people of the town, who let them out incidentally when they do not happen to want them. You seldom get the same two days following, but you get the same boy and the same saddle. Some of the boys are intelligent, but others are sadly stupid. There is a man who affects to be a guide, and entertains travellers who employ him with long speeches about his honesty and tenderness of conscience. Going through a field of clover one day, he interrupted a very flowery speech on this subject, by saying to the donkey-boy: 'See, first, if nobody is looking, and then gather an armful of that *burseem*.'

'Ho! ho!' quoth his employer, 'is this your honesty?'

The man was taken aback for a moment, but recovering, said: 'The owner of that field is my particular friend; and if I were to ask him for the whole crop, he would give it me.'

At Mahatta, as I have hinted, there is nothing to tell of the neighbourhood of the Cataracts. I do not remember that, even as the hush of noon came on, the roar of struggling waters reached our ear. It was some time subsequently that I went to view them from the shore. The road from Essouan was the same as that before described, only we had to push further on; and on turning off again to the right, found ourselves in still more rugged defiles. We were obliged to dismount, and scramble up on foot. Evening was drawing nigh; we wished to see the sun set, and made great exertions to reach the summit in time; but when we came almost at a run to the crest of the ridge, and saw the horizon, that had retreated to a vast distance, nothing but waves of purple light remained to greet us. I defy the world to produce a grander spectacle; but my pen has not the cunning to describe it. Indeed, I could not get to understand the secret of its grandeur—of the wonderful impression it made upon the mind. Was it the very paucity of its elements—billows of black rock congealed, but here and there edged, it seemed, with golden foam—valleys of gloom, fading off on all sides, as it were, into stationary banks of smoke? Such was the huge setting of the picture. And what was the picture itself? A river—a mighty current of water coming out of one of the largest of these shadowy valleys, and then breaking up into a thousand torrents embracing a thousand islands, and meeting in a thou-

sand eddying pools, with a hum, a buzz, a roar, that grew louder as the night came on; so that as we dragged along the precipitous path, our voices, hushed at first into a whisper by admiration of what we beheld, rose imperceptibly into a shout.

I know not why in this lonely place, where nought but the Cataracts and the wind are to speak at all—I know not why, I say, as the winds sink and go away murmuring to other regions, this tumultuous chanting of the waters should increase in potency—why they should seem to grow more restless when nought but the owl, and the bat, and the robber-wolf is abroad, when all else is welcoming the approach of sleep. Scientific men, eavesdroppers of nature, will no doubt find out some explanation in the disposition of different strata of the atmosphere; but at that time I could not help thinking that we had come upon some great meeting of the water-sprites—some parliament of demons engaged in supernatural debate. The light was rapidly fading away over the untrodden desert, and whole troops of thin shadows were coming playing towards us. Islands began to quiver like rapids, and rapids seem to grow solid like islands. A sad and silent black boy who came to us, I know not how, hurried us along from bab to bab. We might almost have fancied ourselves guided by a familiar of the place, had he not taken care at length to tell us that he was unwilling to be benighted in that lonely place. He wanted to go home. And where was his home? Behind that great isolated rock at the village of Korore.

We scrambled over the slippery rocks, whilst the moon gradually substituted herself for the sun. To our surprise, as we came upon a little bay above one of the babs or gates, we heard a voice, with a peculiar twang, singing out a queer couplet, the first line of which, I think, was—'Hail, Columbia, happy land!' An American, in trying to get too near this 'tarnation tempest in a teapot,' had slipped into the water, and presently we actually made out the stripes and stars over a little boat snugly moored along the bank. A few minutes afterwards we heard the barking of dogs, got into a grove of trees, then into the dreaming village of Korore, parted with our sable little guide, and went away under a magnificent moon in search of the valley-road back. The lads who were with us talked of hyenas and jackals, and sang with somewhat exaggerated boldness to scare them away; but we heard not a sound, not a rustle, and saw nothing but rocks and moonlight as we jogged quietly back to our boat.

DR JOHNSON AND MISS HANNAH MORE.

AN IMAGINARY DIALOGUE.*

Hannah More. I have scarcely seen you, sir, since the death of poor Mr Garrick. His loss makes London quite another place to me. I shall return to Bristol with a feeling of dejection hitherto unknown.

Johnson. Poor David! It is forty years and more since he and his brother George called me Master at Edial; and upwards of thirty since I wrote the Prologue with which he opened Drury Lane Theatre. The actor, madam, like the rest of us, does but

'Strut and fret his hour upon the stage,
And then is seen no more.'

H. M. He did much, sir, to elevate the profession of which he was so distinguished an ornament.

J. Both off and on the stage. He shewed the world that it is possible for an actor to embody grand conceptions in a grander form than that world has much idea of; and also to live respectably in society, and to fulfil decorously all the private duties of life.

* The matter of this dialogue is chiefly derived from the recorded sentiments of both the interlocutors.

H. M. Did you not consider his declamation very fine?

J. Why, madam, Garrick was no declaimer at all. Properly speaking, he never declaimed.

H. M. I might have expected you to oppose me, sir; for it is said that you have always considered Mr Garrick your property, and will permit no one either to praise or to blame him in your presence.

J. Mighty well, madam! silly reports are often spread by silly people; but I am vexed to hear them repeated by wise ones. If people praise Garrick injudiciously, as they very commonly do, I don't know any law, civil or social, that requires me to acquiesce: and if I did, I should break that law, as being itself fundamentally unlawful. If they censure Garrick without a cause, or without a just discernment of the particular and pardonable foibles by which he was beset, I think it right to retort upon their ignorance. And so little is there of careful reflection on the part of those who criticise him, that I daresay I find more occasions of opposition than of agreement; and this, madam, may have given rise to the foolish, tattling observation you have repeated. It may be partially true, as I have just explained; but, taken generally, it is false, and certainly ill-natured. Garrick, I reiterate, was no declaimer, great actor though he was.

H. M. But is not good declamation a necessary quality in a great actor? Or what, in short, was Mr Garrick, if not a good declaimer?

J. The fellow that acted Rosencrantz to David's Hamlet, or 'first murderer' to his Macbeth, could have declaimed better than he. But what of that, madam? I never saw David's equal on the stage. His excellence was seen in a correct idea of the part he assumed, and in the natural manner in which he represented it.

H. M. Then do you think, sir, that declamation is out of place on the stage? It seems to my poor judgment that there, if anywhere, the art should be pursued as a study.

J. I only said that Garrick was no declaimer, which has very little to do with your question. Perhaps he neglected the art more than became him; but he wished, madam, to disenchant the public of their love for the declamatory, which had been for a long season preposterously indulged. Little actors imitate great ones; and accordingly the successors of Betterton and Booth tried, one and all, to catch their rhetorical style, and of course exaggerated it in their own versions. Because the chief performer of his age had excelled in impressive declamation, all the performers of subsequent eras must needs declaim too, or expect to be sneered at as inferior actors. Now, Garrick was impatient of this nonsense, and boldly struck out into the opposite course. His genius carried the town by storm; for all could see that, however wrong Garrick might be if judged by tradition, he was orthodoxy itself as interpreted by nature. You know the lines of that dog Churchill—

'Figure, I own, at first may give offence,
And harshly strike the eye's too curious sense;
But when perfections of the mind break forth,
Humour's chaste sallies, judgment's solid worth;
When the pure, genuine flame, by nature taught,

(a very bad line, madam, and only not worse than the next)

Springs into sense, and every action's thought;
Before such merit all objections fly;
Pritchard's genteel, and Garrick's six feet high.'

H. M. Was Mrs Pritchard, then, the reverse of genteel off the stage?

J. Pritchard, madam, in common life, was a vulgar idiot; which gives force to what the 'Rosciad' says of her. She would speak of her gown as her *gownit*; but when upon the boards, all trace of this coarseness left

her; her recitations and gestures were all pervaded by judgment and elegance, or at least gentility.

H. M. If she disguised her vulgarity as completely as Mr Garrick made you forget his low stature, she must have been a great actor indeed. How sad to think that the time has come which applies to our late friend in earnest that epitaph which Dr Goldsmith anticipated for him in jest!

J. You allude to the verses in 'Retaliation'—

'Here lies David Garrick, describe him who can,
An abridgment of all that was pleasant in man;'

and so forth. It is a very suitable epitaph in many points, though not all. Garrick was, without doubt, a very good man. In society he was vastly to be admired, notwithstanding his vanity, which, after all, was very natural in a man of his position. A guest of Mrs Thrale's once attacked David in my hearing on the score of vanity. I told the gentleman, that for Garrick to be vain was the last thing that should excite wonder; and that the only wonder in the case was, that after so many bellows had blown the fire, he was not reduced to a cinder. The wonder is, how *little* Garrick assumed. Applause was his hourly pabulum; from a thousand voices it rang in his ears every night, as the 'well-graced actor left the stage.'

H. M. I protest it does vex me to hear persons who knew nothing about him cavil at him as an avaricious man. I, who have known him so intimately, have known few, very few, who come near him in liberality.

J. Right, child; perfectly right! There might be a little vanity in David's way of disbursing his money; but he proved that money was not his Great First Cause. I often repeat that he has given away more money than any man in England—in spite of Foote's malicious sarcasms.

H. M. What was that, sir?

J. Foote used to say that Garrick walked out with an intention to do a generous action; but that in turning the corner of the street, he met the ghost of a half-penny, which frightened him back again.

H. M. He was careful of expense at home in some respects; but never sufficiently so to justify such a libel as that. My own experience remembers nothing in that dear man but what was kind and generous.

J. And remember, my dear, that the money which David gave away so largely was not his by inheritance or gift. Every shilling of it he had laboured for; and in dispensing it, he dispensed the fruit of toil and trouble. He was, I grant ye, a grasping lad when he started in life. His father was a poor man—a half-pay officer—and the family had to study how to make fourpence do as much as fourpence-halfpenny did for their neighbours. But when David had once made a purse, he kept the strings very loose, and was continually dipping his fingers in it, transmuting the gold into charity.

H. M. Do you think, sir, Dr Goldsmith had any right to say that

'He cast off his friends, as a huntsman his pack,
For he knew when he pleased he could whistle them back?'

I, at least, never perceived any fluctuations in his friendship. Its tide was ever flowing, never ebbing.

J. Why, madam, an old Greek once said, 'He that has friends has no friend'; upon the import of which maxim I recorded, years ago, a few thoughts in an essay in the 'Adventurer.' Jack Wilkes told Boswell that Garrick was a man who had no friends; and the remark had more truth in it than Wilkes usually uttered. Garrick had the elements that compose friendship, and that in a signal degree; but they were allowed to cover too large a surface, and so ran to waste. He was every man's friend, but not this man's, or that. He had no bosom companion—no cherished intimate; and, in the absence of these,

friendship itself, in its proper meaning, is absent also. You must know, madam, that Goldsmith and Garrick crossed each other's path many years since, and though they became pleasant companions, perhaps neither of them forgot first impressions—the tingle of which still irritated poor Goldy's thin skin when he sat down to write 'Retaliation.'

H. M. I suppose some literary squabble occasioned the original coolness?

J. Why, yes, madam; something of the kind. Garrick was lord of the stage, and was thought to exercise his lordship after a very tyrannical fashion. Goldsmith wrote an 'Inquiry into the State of Polite Learning,' wherein he expressed himself severely, and, as David considered, with rude personality, against theatrical despots. When Goldsmith sometime afterwards called on the great manager, and begged his interest in some official or professional capacity, he was roundly rebuked for making so free with one whom he had presumed to castigate without cause. Goldy denied that he had ever intended anything personal; but his suit was unsuccessful, and he set down our modern Thespis as an arrant foe. But then Goldy's temper was highly placable; and when we proposed to increase the number of members in the Literary Club, he zealously supported the election of Garrick, to which even I was at one time peremptorily opposed.

H. M. Opposed to the admission of such a man as Mr Garrick to the club?

J. Yes, madam; and not without reason. I was anxious to keep the club select, and, as you might say, exclusive. Such a man as Garrick would introduce a new feature in his character, and one that might injure, I feared, its legitimate design. For he was a rattle-brained fellow in conversation; full of light gossip; jumping from topic to topic.

H. M. I have at least good authority, sir, for calling him

'As a wit, if not first, in the very first line.'

J. I call him gay and grotesque in conversation. His talk was clever, but frothy, and had no solid foundation. It wanted depth and sentiment. Accordingly, when Hawkins proposed Garrick's admission, I said, 'No, he will disturb us by his buffoonery.'

H. M. That was a severe word, sir.

J. Why, David had vexed me at the time by his vanity in making *sure* of admission. He told Reynolds that he liked our club, and thought he would join it—as though the club had no voice and will of its own. 'He'll be of us?' said I to Reynolds. 'How does he know we will permit him?' The first duke in England has no right to hold such language.' Poor Davy was mightily annoyed by his exclusion. But we relented at last, and many happy evenings have been made the happier by his presence. He was the cheerfulest man I ever knew.

H. M. Did you prefer him, sir, in tragedy or comedy?

J. In comedy. But he was a master in both. 'Take him for all in all, we ne'er shall look upon his like again.'

H. M. I am glad to hear you speak so of dear Mr Garrick. I am sure, sir, he loved you very sincerely.

J. And I loved David with all my heart, and have felt his loss greatly. It is no light matter to lose a friend of forty years' standing and more. I have often been affected by a passage in one of Swift's letters to Pope—'I intend to come over, that we may meet once more; and when we must part, it is what happens to all human beings.' Death has sadly thinned the ranks of my acquaintance; and the older we grow, the faster they drop off, just when we can least spare them.

H. M. We can look forward with joyful hope to a reunion with our old friends in a better world, if our friendship has been worthy of the name.

J. Why, yes, madam, if we have formed virtuous and serious friendships, such anticipation is very consolatory. But many friendships are formed for merely gay and irreligious purposes, in a foolish and worldly spirit, and we cannot expect them to be renewed beyond the grave. Sometimes we seek intimacy with a man through a misconception of his character; here, again, future friendship is not to be expected, even though the intimacy continued to the very edge of the tomb; for after death we shall see face to face, and know as we are known.

H. M. But you have no doubt, sir, that the better sort of friendships will be perpetuated in a future life?

J. Either we shall be satisfied with a renewed intercourse with old friends, or we shall be satisfied without it.

H. M. I can hardly understand the latter clause, sir.

J. Nor I, madam; but I can believe it.

H. M. How fondly my heart assented to the hope, at Mr Garrick's funeral-service, that the soul of our dear brother now departed was in peace!

J. You were present in the abbey, were you not?

H. M. Yes, sir; the bishop of Rochester was civil enough to send tickets for Miss Cadogan and myself; and we were accommodated in a little gallery directly over the grave, where we could hear and see everything with painful distinctness. My heart sank within me as the great doors burst open, and the choir advanced to the grave, all in white surplices, and chanting Handel's solemn anthem. The very players, practised as they were in fiction, shed genuine tears for once.

J. Mrs Garrick seems to bear up bravely.

H. M. Yet she has that within which passes show. She checks with rare energy every outward symptom of anguish. I told her last week that her self-command amazed me; and her reply was, that groans and complaints are very well for those who are to mourn for a little while, but a sorrow, said she, that is to last for life will not be violent and romantic.

J. Poor thing! poor thing! It is a sore trouble, and grievous to be borne. We must pray for her, my dear child, that a yoke so galling may be made easy, and a burden so heavy be made light.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

AUSTRALIA.

By a letter received from a correspondent in New South Wales, it appears that a great impetus has been given to the prosperity of that colony by the mining of coal and its export to California. Coal seams of great thickness are found on the Hunter River, and there mining has been commenced on a large scale. The following is our correspondent's account, dated October 1850:—

'A new trade has sprung up in this river (the Hunter) within the last few months, in the great demand for coal by ships from California. As many as eighteen or twenty sail of from 400 to 800 tons each are now waiting to be loaded at Newcastle (such being the name given to the harbour at the mouth of the river), and a number have sailed within these three or four days. Many others are daily expected to arrive. Besides all this, the export of coal to neighbouring colonies by means of small vessels is exceedingly brisk.

'You can form no proper idea of the vastness of our coal fields. The whole basin of the Hunter is one coal field, extending from the sea at Newcastle to the dividing range of mountains a hundred miles inland. At the present moment there are about twelve mines at work. The coal is generally procured with very little trouble, near and at the surface. A joint-stock coal company have, in consequence of this increased demand, lately extended their operations.

They have just completed a railway of two miles from the harbour to a pit where the working of a seam of superior coal, eleven feet thick, is begun. This seam lies at the depth of only from twenty to twenty-five fathoms from the surface. A powerful steam-engine draws up the coal. The same company have two other pits and engines at work.

'Another coal field has lately been carefully examined, about forty miles to the north of this, and about twenty miles inland from the navigable harbour of Port Stephen. I am informed by a gentleman who visited it, that there is one seam of solid coal cropping out, thirty-four feet thick, and of very superior quality. What an immense amount of dormant wealth in this mass of fuel! Yet all our prodigious resources, mineral and agricultural, are of comparatively little avail, in consequence of a want of labour. We want an almost unlimited accession to our population by continued immigration.

'Nothing has lately been heard of Dr Leichhardt and his party, who went off on the perilous expedition of exploring the interior, across from New South Wales to Swan River. Fears are entertained that this enterprising traveller has fallen a sacrifice to the savages of the central unexplored region. Here, in an old-settled part of the country, we know little of the hardships encountered by explorers. There is one class of men to whom justice has never been done. I allude to the assistant-surveyors employed by government to explore and bring home correct accounts of unknown regions, for it is those occupying the position of assistants in the survey department on whom the hard work principally falls. I lately became acquainted with an assistant-surveyor, and gathered from him many curious details respecting his operations. His story may amuse your readers.

'James Burnett, who was born in Edinburgh, emigrated with his father (a son of the late Mr Burnett of Barns, in Peeblesshire) in 1829 to New South Wales, where he received an appointment in the surveyor-general's office, under the auspices of Sir Thomas Livingston Mitchell. In 1836 Mr Burnett was appointed an assistant-surveyor, and has ever since been employed in various parts of the colony. An assistant-surveyor leads the life of a pioneer amidst deserts, forests, and swamps; crosses rivers, scales mountains, and makes his bivouac in the neighbourhood of savages, snakes, and swarms of mischief-loving insects. Young Burnett had his fair share of these experiences in the bush. For some years he was stationed in Illawarra, and was there much employed in surveying tracts of low swampy land. For whole days his lower extremities were constantly wet, with a fierce sun scorching overhead. On one occasion, when engaged in surveying on the Richmond River, he found it necessary to proceed on a journey when the whole country was flooded. He rode one horse and led another, swimming them at every creek, and as there were no houses or huts by the way, he had to sleep every night in his wet clothes in the open air. His encampment was finally reached without accident.

'About the end of 1846, when in charge of the Moreton Bay district, and suffering from the effect of previous exposure, this active young man was despatched to accompany Captain Perry in his exploration of a river called the Boyne, from its head-waters down to the point where it became navigable. The party, disabled by bad weather, was compelled to retrace its steps, and Burnett was some time afterwards employed to complete the survey himself. This undertaking he effected by incalculable toil, amidst thick scrubs and swamps. Some important parts of the river towards its mouth remained yet to be examined, and he solicited permission to go on a new expedition along the coast by water. This being granted, he left Moreton Bay on the 5th of July 1847. Every body

considered this a hazardous enterprise. Burnett, with seven attendants, arms, and provisions, set out in an open whale-boat, to perform a voyage of 240 miles of ocean on a dangerous coast. The party was successful. It reached the mouth of the Boyne, and proceeded up the river considerably beyond the point formerly reached by land. On his way back, Mr Burnett made a survey of a fine river which he discovered disemboguing into Wide Bay, which the governor afterwards named the Mary. The country adjacent to the Boyne has since this period been settled: it is called the Burnett District, in compliment to its first explorer. Although still a young man, Burnett is much shattered in constitution by the privations to which his duties have exposed him. One day lately, on calling on him, I found him prostrated by rheumatism; but he was as cheerful as ever, and expected soon to be busy with fresh engagements. It is by such men that England opens up new fields for her emigrants. What should we do without a dauntless corps of surveyors?—and of this useful class of persons Scotland contributes her share. Should Leichhardt, the great explorer, cast up, the surveyor-general will doubtless be let loose on his track; and we may hope that at least a portion of the blank which disfigures the map of Australia may be filled up with names, and made geographically known.'

ECONOMIC VALUE OF PEAT.

Dr Anderson, professor of chemistry to the Highland Society, has published a report of certain investigations which he instituted for the purpose of ascertaining if peat was capable of being turned to profitable account, either in the form of charcoal or by its conversion by distillation into products of commercial value. The result, we regret to say, is discouraging. The learned professor finds the selling price of peat-charcoal to be L.1, 15s. per ton. The expenses of the production in Ireland would be L.1, 3s. for the draining of the bog, and the cutting, packing, carrying, and burning of the peat. When rent for the bog is allowed for, it appears that a small profit may be looked for while the present price is sustained. In Scotland, Dr Anderson calculates that the process would cost, at the lowest estimate, L.1, 10s. 6d., but more probably L.1, 13s. 3d. It evidently, therefore, could scarcely become a profitable manufacture in Scotland. Dr Anderson gives another blow to the hopes of certain speculators, by shewing that peat-charcoal, by itself, is not a manure, and that its theoretical utility as an absorbent of ammonia, so as to become a manure, has been vastly overestimated. The experiment grounded upon was performed under peculiar circumstances, which could not be generally followed economically. In ordinary circumstances, it has very little power of absorbing ammonia; and even when it extinguishes odours, that result is not found to have taken place to any important extent. The professor says: 'The absence of absorptive power in peat-charcoal led me to inquire whether or not peat itself possesses this property in any greater degree—a matter which it is of some importance to determine, as that substance is so commonly added to the manure heap as an absorbent. The experiments were made on an excellent peat from Dargavel, Renfrewshire, where it occurs in considerable depth. That which I employed was taken from the surface, and from depths respectively of 2½, 3½, and 4½ feet. The result shewed that no less than from 1½ to 2 per cent. of ammonia were absorbed; and the experiments were sufficiently varied to demonstrate that it is not only capable of absorbing, but of retaining a large quantity of ammonia, under what may be considered very unfavourable circumstances.'

'Although this per-centage may appear small, it must be recollected that it is more than three times as much as is contained in farmyard manure of ordinary quality,

and that the addition of even a small proportion of peat to the manure-heaps would be likely to retain, in a completely satisfactory manner, any ammonia which existed there in a volatile condition.

'I need scarcely say, however, that we must be prepared to find that all samples of peat will not be equally efficient as absorbents: the peat which is most porous will absorb more ammonia than that which is dense. As it is customary to employ clay or dry earth as an absorbent of the waste matters of the manure-heap, it is well to contrast their value for that purpose with that of peat. A specimen of a wheat-soil was experimented upon, but was found to have absorbed in 2000 grains of soil only 0.17 grains of ammonia.'

With regard to the plan of distillation, the learned professor alludes to the proceedings of a company by whom the process is carried on. In the calculation issued by the company, 'the expenditure for the peat, wages, wear and tear of apparatus, &c. is estimated at L.11,717; whilst the produce, consisting of sulphate of ammonia, acetate of lime, naphtha, paraffine, volatile and fixed oil, is estimated at L.23,625.

'It must be distinctly understood, however, that this estimate is not the result of the actual manufacture, but of an experiment made upon two tons of peat; and the result on the large scale might, and would probably yield very different results. Little satisfactory information can, in fact, be drawn from an experiment of this sort; because of course it has been made with care, and by men of intelligence, who have attended to every step of the process, while matters are very different when in the actual work we come to depend upon common workmen. The apparatus used is no doubt very ingenious; but, as far as I can understand it, appears to leave the process very much at the mercy of the workmen, whose carelessness would greatly diminish the amount of products obtained.

'As far as the value of the product obtained goes, the company appear to have in many cases overrated them. Should any of these products prove unsaleable, of course the 100 per cent. profit which the estimates shew will be greatly reduced. It would be further diminished by increasing the expenditure, which appears to me to be greatly under-estimated. So far as I have been able to ascertain by inquiries of the expense of distilling wood, and of purifying the products of coal-tar, I am led to infer that the cost of peat-distillation, and the conversion of the products into a marketable condition, would be much greater than is estimated. The manufacture of sulphate of ammonia, for instance, is an expensive operation, and extremely destructive to the apparatus, so that for this alone a very large sum must be put down in the shape of wear and tear. The amount of labour required is also, as I think, much underrated, and no allowance is made for the large capital which must be invested in apparatus and buildings for carrying on the operations.

'From a careful consideration of all the circumstances of the manufacture, I have come to the conclusion that it is quite impossible that the large profits alleged are ever likely to be realised, and I question much whether any remunerative return is at all likely to be obtained. On this, however, I am unwilling to express a definitive opinion; because I do not believe it possible to do so in the present state of our information, although the previous want of success of similar experiments seems to confirm it. Of this much we may be certain, that even if it returns one-fourth part of the expected profit, in no long time the manufacture will be taken up in all parts of the country. There is, however, one matter of no little importance, which must be considered, and it is the absolute certainty, that with the greatly-increased production which would be occasioned by the extension of the manufacture, the prices of the products would be considerably reduced. The salts of ammonia, for which the demand is at present scarcely

equal to the supply, would soon fall in price, as well as several of the other products, to the inevitable extinction of such profits as are now obtained.

'I may sum up the results at which I have arrived by simply saying:—1st, That the value of peat-charcoal as a manure and absorbent of the valuable constituents of manures, is not such as to justify the farmer in employing it, or to encourage us in attempting its introduction into Scotland; 2d, That dry peat is a valuable absorbent of ammonia, and, as such, deserves the attention of the agriculturist to a greater extent even than it has yet done; 3d, That the profits of the distillation of peat appear to be greatly exaggerated, and although they cannot be definitely estimated at present, the failure of all previous attempts should teach us great caution in examining the experiments of theorists.'

LIFE'S EVANGELS.

SILENT upon the threshold of life's portal
Sits the veiled Isis of the FUTURE—all
That time has yet of bitterness and sorrow:
Lies hid beneath that dark, unlifted pall.

Behind us sadly stands a mournful maiden
With an enchanted mirror in her hand;
Cypress and violets on her brow are blended,
With daisies ever fresh from childhood's land.

The shadowy PAST glides o'er the changeful mirror,
Like sunny tears and clouds o'er April skies,
Or lit by avenging lightnings that have smitten
The heart with agony that never dies!

Thus the accusing and the unknown haunt us—
The hidden wo and the remember'd pain;
But FAITH and DUTY in the orb'd Present
With angel pinions hide the phantoms twain.

SUTHERLAND.

NIGHTINGALES—A CAUTION TO PURCHASERS.

The principal dealers in these noble birds reside in the classic region of the Seven Dials, London; and as there is much trickery practised here, I will pave the way for plain-sailing. In order to make a great show of business, some of these dealers—one in particular—always collect together a number of nightingales' cages, at least ten days before the birds arrive amongst us! These are placed on high shelves, after being artfully papered up in front with tissue paper, so as to make people believe that each cage contains a nightingale. When folks express their surprise at the birds coming over so early, they are told 'the birds are very wild, and must not be looked at for at least ten days. At the end of that time they will be quite tame, and in full song.' This bait is generally swallowed by *parvenus*, who keep on calling till at last they do hear a nightingale sing! Perhaps there are two real birds among the whole of the papered-up cages! A little caution and a little common prudence after this intelligible hint, will put a novice on his guard, and enable him to appear a knowing one. He cannot speak too little; but he had need be all eye and all ear.—*William Kidd, in the Gardeners' Chronicle.*

PLANTS.

Plants vitiate the air of a room at night, not because they part with carbonic acid, and inhale oxygen—for a human being would vitiate it more in this way—but from their powerful odour, which has a most violent effect on the nervous system of some persons.

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